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ABSTRACT

Teachers in the English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) Program of Catholic Charities Immigration and Refugee Services have recognized the need to foster intercultural awareness and understanding as well as language learning in their classrooms. Discussion of cultural traditions and holiday celebrations in the countries of origin of Central Pennsylvania ESL students may be one way to foster appreciation of diversity and recognition of common experiences and values on the part of these students. This booklet uses holidays and traditional observances in five countries (Eritrea, India, Mexico, Russia, and Vietnam) as instructional material for ESL classes. Each section begins with a fact sheet and map, giving basic information on population, geography, and major holidays; those described in this booklet are marked with an asterisk. Information on holiday celebrations was obtained primarily from current ESL students. Teachers may use the lessons as a springboard to encourage discussion and interaction among ESL students from different cultures and backgrounds. The exercises that accompany the lessons are designed for beginning and intermediate ESL students.

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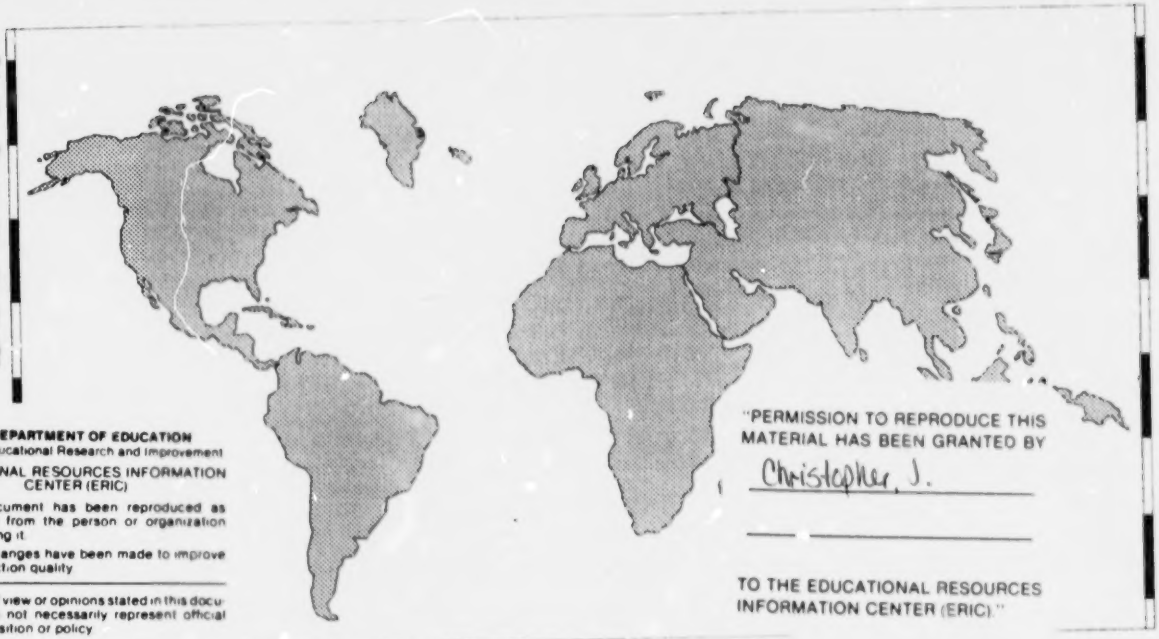

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INTERNATIONAL HOLIDAYS and OBSERVANCES

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INTERNATIONAL

HOLIDAYS

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OBSERVANCES

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INTERNATIONAL HOLIDAYS AND OBSERVANCES: A RESOURCE GUIDE FOR ENGLISH-AS-A SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHERS

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Catholic Charities
Diocese of Harrisburg

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INTERNATIONAL HOLIDAYS AND OBSERVANCES

By Martha L. Berg

Immigration and Refugee Services
Catholic Charities
Diocese of Harrisburg, PA

A 353 Project funded by
The Pennsylvania Department of Education
Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education

June 1992

Teachers in the English as a Second Language Program of Catholic Charities Immigration and Refugee Services have recognized the need to foster intercultural awareness and understanding as well as language learning in their classrooms. Most readily available ESL curriculum materials for adults, however, are prepared with the intention of aiding recent immigrants in their adaptation to North American culture; they do not address the need for multicultural awareness in a culturally diverse ESL setting.

Discussion of cultural traditions and holiday celebrations in the countries of origin of Central Pennsylvania ESL students may be one way to foster appreciation of diversity and recognition of common experiences and values on the part of these students. This booklet uses holidays and traditional observances in five countries as instructional material for ESL classes. The countries were chosen to repre-

sent the places of origin of many recent immigrants to Central Pennsylvania. Each section begins with a fact sheet and map, giving basic information on population, geography, and major holidays; those described in this booklet are marked with an asterisk. Information on holiday celebrations was obtained primarily from current ESL students, by means of interviews and informal discussions, and reflects their own holiday customs and traditions.

The information presented here may be used in a variety of ways: the holidays of each of the five countries may be taught as a separate unit, individual holidays may be covered as they occur in the calendar year, or one type of holiday (e.g. civic or memorial) may be presented, with students from other countries asked to share information about how similar holidays are observed in their own cultures. In any case, teachers may use the lessons provided here as a springboard to encourage discussion and interaction among ESL students from different cultures and backgrounds. The exercises that accompany the lessons are designed for beginning and intermediate ESL students.

Many people participated in the development of the International Holidays and Observances project and have been generous with their time and suggestions. Thanks go to the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education, for funding the project; Program Director Beverly Smith, ESL Program Manager Faye Schirato and ESL teacher Annabelle Saylor for their gracious and professional supervision; the ESL teachers for preparing exercises to accompany the text and for field-testing lessons with their classes; Messiah College interns Donna Kenney and Vanisa Sellers for researching holidays and conducting interviews; and especially to Catholic Charities Immigration and Refugee Services' international staff and ESL students for their generous sharing of the information about holiday traditions which has formed the basis for this booklet.

ERITREA

OFFICIAL NAME: Eritrea (unofficial until United Nations-supervised election in 1993)

AREA: 45,400 square miles (117,600 sq. km.), about the size of Pennsylvania

POPULATION: 3,500,000

TOPOGRAPHY: dry coastal plain to rugged mountains

CLIMATE: temperate to very hot and dry

CAPITAL: Asmara

GOVERNMENT: provisional

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: Tigrinyan and Arabic

MAJOR RELIGIONS: Islam, Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity

IMPORTANT HOLIDAYS:

Ramadan, variable date

*Orthodox Christmas, January 7

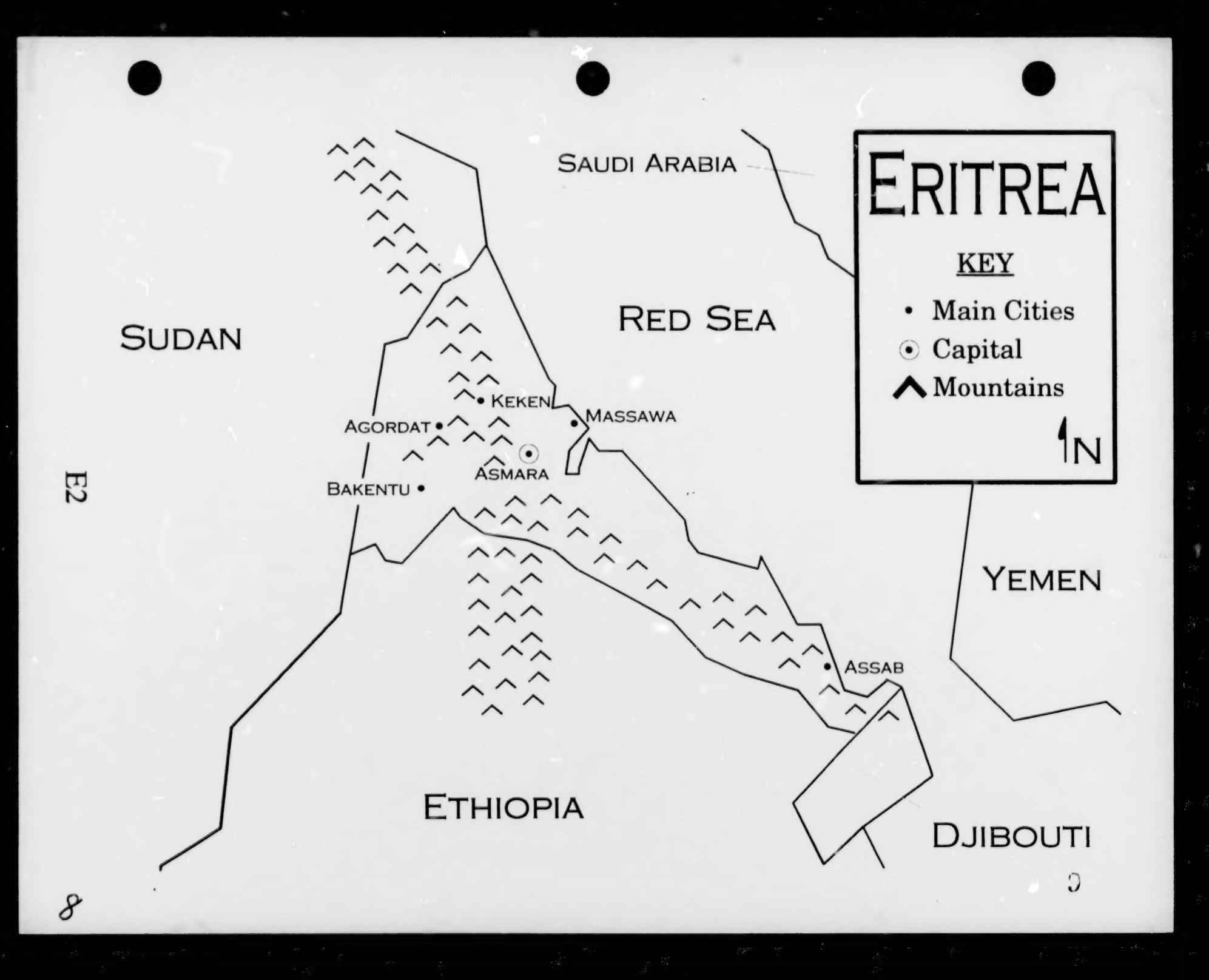
Easter, March or April

*Freedom Day, May 30

Buhé, August 19

**Maskal*, September

Memorial Day, September 5


ERITREA
KEY
Main Cities
Capital
Mountains
N
SAUDI ARABIA
RED SEA
SUDAN
KEKEN
MASSAWA
AGORDAT
ASMARA
BAKENTU
YEMEN
ASSAB
ETHIOPIA
DJIBOUTI
E2

ORTHODOX CHRISTMAS
(LEDDAT)

Orthodox Christians in Eritrea celebrate *Leddat* on January 7. *Leddat* is the Eritrean Christmas holiday.

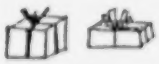
An ancient legend says that shepherds were so happy to hear of the birth of Jesus that they turned their crook-necked staffs upside down and began to play a game with them. The game is called *ganna* and is still played every year on the afternoon of *Leddat*.

Eritreans have two days off from work for *Leddat*. At midnight, people go to church and stay until six o'clock in the morning. After church they eat the traditional meal at home. They cut the throat of a sheep or other animal and cook the meat in a lot of oil. They drink a strong beverage called *siwa*. During the day, friends and relatives come to visit. They exchange gifts such as shoes and clothing. In the villages, people dressed in new clothes gather in the streets and dance to the music of horns, drums and guitars.

EXERCISES

I. **Matching. Draw a line from the word on the left side to the matching picture on the right side.**

1. *siwa*
2. staff
3. sheep
4. drum
5. guitar
6. home
7. birthday
8. church
9. gifts
10. January 7



II. **Bingo. As your teacher reads each word, write it in one of the blank squares below.**

Then play Bingo.

staff	*Ganna*	throat	horn	*siwa*
home	Jesus	*Leddat*	meat	shepherds
sheep	drum	church	gifts	relative
friends	shoes	clothes	visit	streets
guitar	dance	village	birth	

B	I	N	G	O
		FREE		

FREEDOM DAY

In Eritrea, Freedom Day was celebrated for the first time on May 30, 1991. Eritrea was once ruled by Italy and Great Britain and became a part of Ethiopia in 1962. But the people of Eritrea wanted their independence. They fought for it for thirty years.

In May, 1991, finally the Eritreans defeated the Ethiopian army, and the war ended. In 1993 the United Nations will hold a special election in Eritrea. The people will decide whether they want to become an independent nation.

On May 30, 1991, Eritreans had a holiday from work for the first Freedom Day celebration. They danced in the streets of Asmara and other cities. Families were reunited for the first time in many years. They were happy that the war was over.

EXERCISES

I. **Write "yes" or "no" in the blanks.**

1. Eritrea celebrated Freedom Day for the first time on May 30, 1951. _____
2. The United Nations will hold a special election in Eritrea next year. _____
3. Eritreans had a holiday from work on Freedom Day. _____
4. The Eritreans were sad because the war was over. _____
5. Many families were separated on May 30, 1991. _____

II. **Writing. Now rewrite the "no" statements above to make them "yes" statements.**

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

III. **Write a few sentences to tell how you celebrate Independence Day.**

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

IV. **Matching. Match the phrases on the right with the words on the left.**

_____ 1. army	a. a day that celebrates a special event
_____ 2. election	b. a country
_____ 3. war	c. two or more large towns
_____ 4. independence	d. twelve months
_____ 5. nation	e. a group of soldiers
_____ 6. holiday	f. choosing a person for office by voting
_____ 7. cities	g. a violent fight between two groups or countries
_____ 8. year	h. freedom from others

MASKAL

Orthodox Christians in Eritrea celebrate *Maskal* in September. It honors the finding of the True Cross, on which Jesus was crucified. Everyone has the day off for this holiday. It comes at the end of the rainy season in Eritrea, when the yellow and orange *maskal* flowers are in bloom.

Girls make chains and skirts of *maskal* flowers and go from house to house singing songs. Families make *demeras*, poles topped with daisies and a Coptic cross. Each village has a large *demera*, and families place their *demeras* against the larger one. They light the pile with a torch. People sing and dance around the fire.

EXERCISES

I. Choose the correct word to complete the sentence.

1. *Maskal* honors the finding of the True _____. (Flower, Family, Cross)
2. Eritreans have _____ day(s) off from work for *Maskal*. (one, two, three)
3. *Maskal* comes at the end of the _____ season. (rainy, dry, snowy)
4. The people sing and dance around the _____. (houses, *demera*, cars)

II. Word Search. Find and circle these words:

chains	pole	sing	true
daisies	rainy	torch	two
fire			

d	a	t	t	w	o	n
a	p	o	l	e	h	l
i	g	r	a	i	n	y
s	o	c	p	f	a	f
i	c	h	a	i	n	s
e	b	o	t	r	u	e
s	i	n	g	e	e	b

III. **Matching. Draw a line from the word on the left side to the matching picture on the right.**

1. True Cross

2. poles

3. daisies

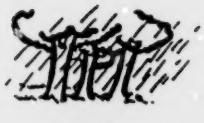
4. torch

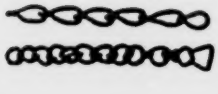
5. chains

6. sing

7. rainy

8. fire





RECIPE

Siwa

water
flour or commeal
yeast

Mix together and allow to sit for three days.
Then filter and drink.

INDIA

OFFICIAL NAME: Republic of India *(Bharat)*

AREA: 1,269,000 square miles (3,287,000 sq. km.), about twice the size of Alaska

POPULATION: 817 million

TOPOGRAPHY: low coastal plain to Himalaya Mountains, 25,645 ft.

CLIMATE: Temperate to subtropical monsoon

CAPITAL: New Delhi

GOVERNMENT: federal republic

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: Hindi

MAJOR RELIGIONS: Hinduism, Islam

IMPORTANT HOLIDAYS:

Ramadan, variable date

Basant Panchami, February

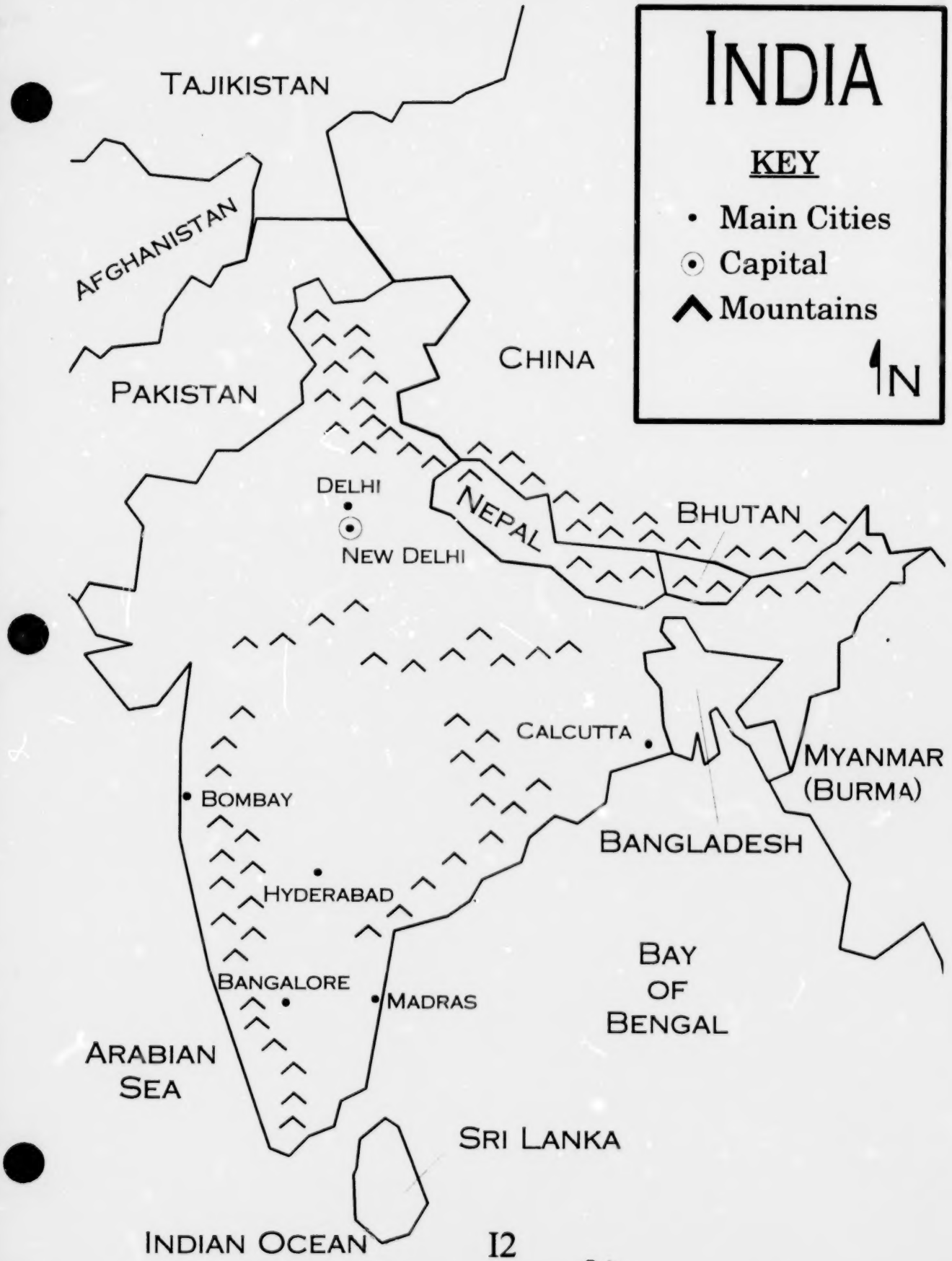
Ram Navami, April

*Independence Day, August 15

**Krishna*'s Birthday, August

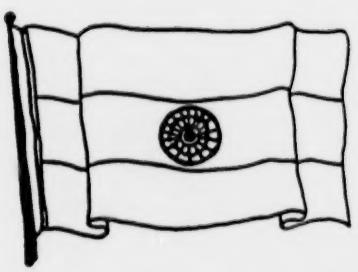
Birthday of Mohandas K. Gandhi, October 2

**Divali*, November


INDIA
KEY
• Main Cities
⊙ Capital
^ Mountains
N
TAJIKISTAN
AFGHANISTAN
PAKISTAN
CHINA
DELHI
NEW DELHI
NEPAL
BHUTAN
CALCUTTA
MYANMAR (BURMA)
BOMBAY
BANGLADESH
HYDERABAD
BAY OF BENGAL
BANGALORE
MADRAS
ARABIAN SEA
SRI LANKA
INDIAN OCEAN

INDEPENDENCE DAY

In 1858 England ruled India. Indians wanted their independence. In 1920 Mohandas K. Gandhi became the leader of the Indian National Congress. He and his people did not like to fight, but they did not obey English laws. Because of Gandhi's work, England finally agreed to India's independence. India became an independent country on August 15, 1947.



Today, Indian Independence Day is celebrated as a national holiday on August 15. Families spend the day together. They eat large meals and chocolate candy. They go to the movies or play volleyball or cricket. There are special fireworks programs, and the Indian flag is seen everywhere. The flag, adopted in 1947, has horizontal stripes of saffron, white, and green. In the center is an ancient symbol called the *Dharma Chakra*, or Wheel of Law.

EXERCISES

I. Synonyms

Draw a line to the word (or words) on the right side that means almost <u>the same</u> as the word on the left side.

1. independence	a. freedom
2. celebrate	b. picture
3. holiday	c. nation
4. country	d. have a party
5. symbol	e. day off

II. Antonyms

Draw a line to the word on the right side that means <u>the opposite</u> of the word on the left side.

1. leader	a. small
2. obey	b. alone
3. large	c. vertical
4. together	d. disobey
5. horizontal	e. follower

KRISHNA'S BIRTHDAY
(JANMASHTAMI)

Hindus believe that every time there are troubles in the world, the god *Vishnu*, the Preserver of the Universe, is born again in human form to help solve the problems. *Janmashtami*, in late August, celebrates the eighth incarnation of *Vishnu*, when he was born as *Krishna*. The life of *Krishna* is described in the Hindu religious poem, the *Mahabharata*.

Many families prepare for *Krishna*'s birthday by putting a statue of him in a cradle decorated with flowers. For twenty-four hours they fast, or go without food, in honor of *Krishna*'s birth. On the eve of *Janmashtami*, Hindus go to the temple for a special program. At midnight, the hour of *Krishna*'s birth, priests dressed in white and orange bring out a statue of the baby *Krishna*. The people cry out, "*Vijay!*", which means "Victory!"

In the part of India where *Krishna* grew up taking care of cows, people dance in the moonlight, as he liked to do.

EXERCISES

Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?
Answer the questions.

1. Who is the eighth form of the god *Vishnu*?

_____

2. In what month was he born? _____
3. Where did he live? _____
4. What religious group celebrates *Janmashtami*?

_____

5. When do people go to the temple for this celebration?

_____

6. Who dresses in white and orange? _____

_____

7. What do the people shout? _____

_____

8. How long do the people fast? _____

_____

9. What kind of statue do the priests bring out?

_____

10. When do they bring out the statue? _____

DIVALI

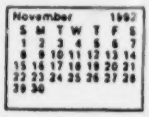
In the Hindu religion, *Lakshmi* is the goddess of wealth. Hindus celebrate *Divali*, in November, as the day when *Lakshmi* visits every home to begin a new year of prosperity.

To prepare for the holiday, families clean and paint their houses and put up new curtains. They make beautiful paintings of colored powder on the floors. *Divali* means "a row of lights"; people set up small clay lamps all along the roofs, windows, and court-yards of their houses. They believe that *Lakshmi* won't bless dark houses.

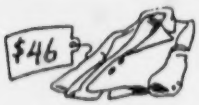
Families spend the day together. Everyone wears new clothes. They eat a holiday meal of chicken or goat meat picked up with pieces of a soft bread made of water and rice flour. They eat candy made of sesame seeds and drink wine, beer, or a white juice similar to coconut milk. People shake hands and wish each other a happy new year.

MATCHING EXERCISE

Write the letter of the correct words on the right side in front of the number on the left.



_____ 1.



_____ 2.

_____ 3.

_____ 4.

_____ 5.

_____ 6.

_____ 7.

_____ 8.

_____ 9.

_____ 10.

a. the month in which *Divali* is celebrated

b. goat

c. drink

d. sesame candy

e. "row of lights"

f. together

g. shake hands

h. new clothes

i. cleaning

j. new curtains

RECIPE

Matiea Chips, a snack food for special days

2 pounds *Matiea* flour
2 heaping Tablespoons yellow flour
"a little bit" of chili powder
1 Tablespoon sugar
2 - 3 Tablespoons oil

Mix above ingredients and add water to make a smooth dough. Roll very thin. Cut into little circles. Fry in hot oil. Drain on paper towels.

MEXICO

OFFICIAL NAME: United Mexican States *(Estados Unidos Mexicanos)*

AREA: 764,OOO square miles (1,978,000 sq. km.), about three times the size of Texas

POPULATION: 81 million

TOPOGRAPHY: coastal lowlands, central high plateaus, and mountains to 18,000 ft.

CLIMATE: tropical to desert

CAPITAL: Mexico City

GOVERNMENT: federal republic

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: Spanish

MAJOR RELIGION: Roman Catholicism

IMPORTANT HOLIDAYS:

Birthday of Benito Juárez, March 21

Holy Week, March or April

*Battle of Puebla, May 5

*Independence Day, September 16

*Day of the Dead, November 2

*Our Lady of Guadalupe, December 12

*Christmas, December 25

MEXICO
KEY
Main Cities
Capital
Mountains
N
UNITED STATES
CIUDAD JUAREZ
CHIHUAHUA
MONTERREY
GULF OF MEXICO
MERIDA
GUADALAJARA
MEXICO CITY
PUEBLA
VERACRUZ
BELIZE
GUATEMALA
PACIFIC OCEAN

M2

30

31

THE BATTLE OF PUEBLA, ON THE FIFTH OF MAY
(EL CINCO DE MAYO)

Benito Juárez was president in Mexico when Napoleon III invaded the country. Mexico had no money to pay its debts to Britain, Spain, and France. The three countries decided to send soldiers into Mexico. Napoleon III thought that he could overrun the whole country. He wanted to turn Mexico into a French protectorate. The French came into Mexico and occupied the country. On May 5, 1862, the Mexicans fought a battle against the French in the town of Puebla. This fighting kept the French out of Mexico City. The Mexicans won the battle and sent the French away. Benito Juárez became president again. He was a very good leader.

On this holiday, the children do not go to school and families are home from work. They get together with their friends, dance Mexican dances, and eat a big meal of *tacos*, *enchiladas*, beans and rice.

EXERCISES

I. **Put the sentences in order. Number 1 is what happened first.**

_____ The Mexicans fought the French in Puebla.
_____ Mexico could not pay its debts.
_____ Napoleon III invaded Mexico.
_____ The Mexicans won the battle on May 5, 1862.
_____ Mexico owed money to Britain, Spain, and France.
_____ Britain, Spain, and France sent soldiers to Mexico.
_____ Napoleon III wanted to rule Mexico.
_____ Benito Juárez became president again.

II. **Complete the sentences.**

1. Benito Juárez was president in Mexico when _____
_____.
2. Mexico owed money to _____
_____.
3. On May 5, 1862, the Mexicans _____
_____.
4. _____ won the battle. They fought against
_____.
5. On May 5, children _____.
6. Everyone dances and eats _____
_____.

INDEPENDENCE DAY
(EL DIA DE INDEPENDENCIA)

Mexico was once ruled by Spain and was called "New Spain." The Mexicans did not like to be ruled by Spain. They decided that they wanted to be independent.

On September 16, 1810, a priest named Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla called a meeting in the small church of Dolores. Instead of giving his usual sermon, he asked the people to fight against the foreign rulers. This speech was named the "*Grito de Dolores*" ("*grito*" means "call"), and it is one of the most famous speeches in Mexican history. Don Hidalgo is called the "Father of Mexican Independence."

The war for Mexican independence continued for eleven years. Finally in 1821, the last Spanish ruler signed the Treaty of Córdoba, which gave Mexicans their freedom.

EXERCISES

I. Which word means the same?

_____ 1. independence	a. fight
_____ 2. conquer	b. speech
_____ 3. war	c. alien, strange
_____ 4. foreign	d. freedom
_____ 5. treaty	e. win, overcome
_____ 6. sermon	f. agreement

II. Answer the questions.

1. Who is called the "Father of Independence?"

   _____

2. When is Independence Day celebrated in Mexico?

   _____

3. What did the last Spanish ruler do in 1821?

   _____

4. What is the sermon called that Don Hidalgo gave on September 16, 1810?_____

   _____

5. How long was the war for Mexican Independence?

   _____

6. Who ruled Mexico before it became independent?

   _____

DAY OF THE DEAD
(EL DIA DE LOS MUERTOS)

The Day of the Dead is celebrated on November 2. In the Roman Catholic religion, it is called All Souls' Day, a special time to pray for the souls of the dead that have not yet found a resting place.

The Indians believed that the dead returned once a year to be fed. Now everyone in Mexico celebrates the Day of the Dead. People prepare special food for the dead. Whole families take gifts of food and marigold flowers to the cemeteries to put on the graves of family members and friends. The children wear masks that look like skulls and eat candy in the shape of skeletons.

The Day of the Dead is not a sad time. Instead, people think of this holiday as a happy time to welcome back the souls of their dead family members and friends as honored guests.

EXERCISES

I. **True or False? Correct the false statements.**

1. _____ The Day of the Dead is a happy time for Mexicans.
2. _____ The Mexicans give food to the dead because they are afraid of them.
3. _____ The Day of the Dead is celebrated by everyone in Mexico.
4. _____ This Mexican holiday is celebrated on November 2.
5. _____ The Indians believe that the dead return twice a year.

II. **Answer the questions.**

1. What is another name for the Day of the Dead?

   _____

2. What do the children do on this day? _____

   _____

3. Do you celebrate a holiday like this one in your country? _____ When? _____
   What do you do?_____

   _____

OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE
(LA VIRGEN DE GUADALUPE)

On December 12, many Mexicans celebrate the day of Our Lady of Guadalupe as the most important Roman Catholic holiday of the year. Our Lady of Guadalupe is the patron saint of Mexico.

Long ago, in the year 1531, the Virgin Mary appeared in a vision to a Christian Indian man. She had dark skin and a mixture of both Indian and European features. She asked to have a church built on the spot where she appeared to the Indian. Many people thought his vision was a miracle. Today there is a basilica, or large church, where the Virgin appeared.

On December 12, people from all over Mexico go to the basilica to honor Our Lady of Guadalupe. Many of them creep slowly to the church on their knees, saying prayers. Later, there is a big *fiesta*. Musicians called *mariachis* wear Mexican costumes and *sombreros* and play traditional Mexican songs. People dance in the streets.

EXERCISE

Fill in the blanks.

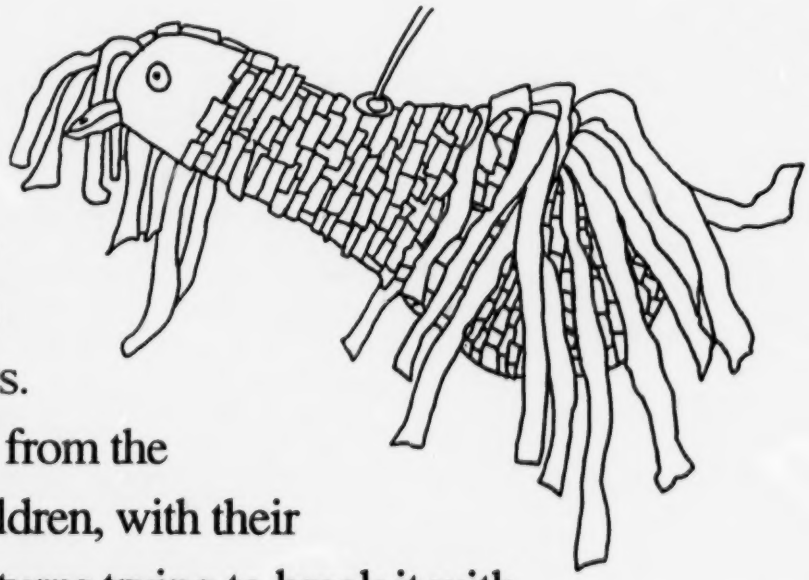
On December 12, many _____ celebrate the day of _____ Lady of Guadalupe as _____ most important Roman Catholic _____ of the year. Our _____ of Guadalupe is the _____ saint of Mexico.

Long _____, in the year 1531, _____ Virgin Mary appeared in _____ vision to a Christian _____ man. She had dark _____ and a mixture of _____ Indian and European features. _____ asked to have a _____ built on the spot _____ she appeared to the _____. Many people thought his _____ was a miracle. Today _____ is a basilica, or _____ church, where the Virgin _____.

CHRISTMAS
(NAVIDAD)

The Christmas season in Mexico begins early, when families set up their *nacimiento*, or nativity scene, at home. Another way Mexicans honor the birth of Jesus is with the *posadas*. Every night from December 16 to 24, groups of people dressed as Mary and Joseph go from house to house asking for a place to stay. Finally one family lets them in, and everyone has a party, or *fiesta*.

At the parties children break the *piñata*, a papier-mâché container shaped like an animal and filled with candy and little toys. The *piñata* is hung from the ceiling, and the children, with their eyes covered, take turns trying to break it with a stick. After it is broken, everyone rushes to pick up the candy.



Special foods for the Christmas *fiestas* include *tamales*, made of cornmeal wrapped in corn husks; *buñuelos*, deep-fried pancakes; roast turkey; and *atole*, a drink made of cornmeal and cinnamon.

At midnight on Christmas Eve, whole families go to church for a special service, the *Misa del Gallo*, to welcome the birth of Jesus. Christmas Day is quiet, but the season does not end until January 6, the Day of the Three Kings *(El Día de los Reyes)*. Children put out empty shoes the night before, and in the morning they find the shoes filled with presents.

EXERCISES

I. Circle the correct answer.

1. A *piñata* is
   a. an animal in Mexico.
   b. a container full of candy and toys.
   c. a game that adults play at Christmas.
2. Parents fill the children's shoes with presents
   a. every night before the posada.
   b. on Christmas Eve.
   c. on the Day of the Three Kings.
3. The posadas in Mexico
   a. are celebrated from December 16 to 24.
   b. honor the birth of Jesus.
   c. are a time for family and friends to be together.
   d. are all of the above.

II. Use each of the following words in a sentence.

container	*posada*
special	presents
piñata	midnight

RECIPE

Buñuelos

3/4 cup milk
1/4 cup butter or margarine
2 eggs, beaten
3 cups flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
1 Tablespoon sugar
Fat for frying
Mixture of sugar and cinnamon

Heat butter and milk to boiling; cool. Stir in beaten eggs. Mix flour, baking powder, salt and sugar together. Stir in egg mixture; blend well. Knead dough on a lightly floured surface 1 to 2 minutes until smooth. Divide dough into 24 balls. Roll each ball into a 4-inch circle. Fry in hot deep fat until light brown, turning once. Drain on paper towels. Dust with cinnamon-sugar mixture.

M14

RUSSIA

OFFICIAL NAME: Russian Federation or Russia

AREA: 6,592,800 square miles (17,075,400 sq.km.), the size of Australia and China combined

POPULATION: 142,117,000.

TOPOGRAPHY: coastal plains, mountains, tundra

CLIMATE: temperate to Arctic

CAPITAL: Moscow

GOVERNMENT: republic

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: Russian

MAJOR RELIGIONS: Russian Orthodox Christianity, Judaism, Islam

IMPORTANT HOLIDAYS:+

*New Year's Day, January 1
Army Day, February 23
*Women's Day, March 8
Labor Day, May 1
*Victory Day, May 9
Constitution Day, October 7
Anniversary of Communist Revolution, November 7 & 8

+Note: Until the late 1980's, the Communist government of the Soviet Union discouraged the celebration of religious holidays of any kind. With the change in government, practices will change. The holidays listed here are civic and cultural in nature.

RUSSIA
KEY
Main Cities
Capital
Mountains
N
ARCTIC OCEAN
LITHUANIA
ESTONIA
LATVIA
ST PETERSBURG
BELARUS
MOSCOW
SVERDLOVSK
UKRAINE
R2
MOLDOVA
GEORGIA
ARMENIA
AZERBAIJAN
CASPIAN SEA
KAZAKHSTAN
UZBEKISTAN
MONGOLIA
IRKUTSK
TURKMENIA
TAJIKISTAN
KYRGYZSTAN
CHINA
VLADIVOSTOK
PACIFIC OCEAN

NEW YEAR
(NOVIY GODE)

For several generations, the biggest cultural celebration in Russia has been at the beginning of the New Year. In preparation for the holiday, people decorate evergreen trees with lights and ornaments. They build sculptures and houses of ice and snow.

The holiday begins with parties at offices and workplaces on the afternoon of December 31. That evening, everyone watches television to hear the speech of the President, who wishes a good life to the people in the New Year. Many families give parties for their friends and relatives. They eat special foods such as goose or turkey, *pirogi*, *salad olivye*, holiday cakes, and *golubtsy* (beef, rice, and cabbage). They sit at the table and say farewell to the Old Year with toasts of wine and vodka.

The folk figures *Ded Moroz* (Grandfather Frost) and his granddaughter *Snegourochka* (The Snow Maiden) bring bags of gifts to put under the tree for the little children to open. At

midnight people open a bottle of champagne to welcome the New Year. They go to the center of town, some dressed in masks of animal faces, to sing and dance and watch displays of fireworks. Workers have a holiday on January 1 and 2. Families play in the snow and take sleigh rides in the country.

EXERCISES

I. **Calendar. Fill in the calendar for January of this year.**

MONTH _____ YEAR _____						

II. **Calendar Questions.**

1. What day is the Russian New Year? Circle it on your calendar.
2. What day of the week is Russian New Year this year?

   _____
3. What day is January 1? _____
4. What day is January 31? _____
5. What day is the first day of January?

   _____
6. What day was the last day of December?

   _____
7. How many days are in January? _____
8. What is the first day in February? _____

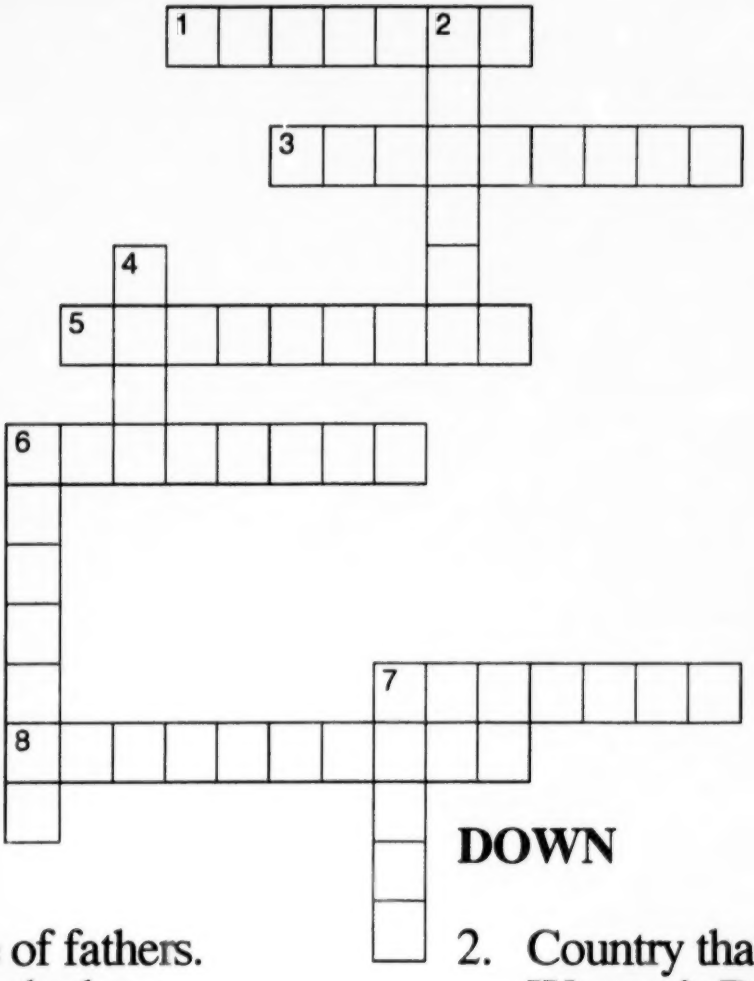
WOMEN'S DAY
(ZHENSKIY DEN)

In Russia, Women's Day is celebrated on March 8, which is also the International Women's Day. During the week of Women's Day, coworkers may write a poem to each woman in the workplace and treat them with special respect. On the day of March 8, everyone has a holiday from work to honor the special contribution of women to Russian society.

Families give special cards to their mothers, and men give flowers to women on that day. Men help out in the kitchen with cooking and with other housework usually done by women. Families eat together at home or at a restaurant. Women like to wear new clothes for this holiday. Everyone takes time to thank women for their good efforts at home and on the job.

EXERCISES

I. **Crossword Puzzle. Use the words from the story on Women's Day to answer the questions at the bottom. Put the answers in the puzzle.**



ACROSS

1. Opposite of fathers.
3. Cleaning the house.
5. Name of holiday.
6. Who gives cards to mothers?
7. A word for making dinner.
8. Where do families eat on Women's Day?

DOWN

2. Country that celebrates Women's Day.
4. What men write to women on this holiday.
6. Gifts men give to women.
7. Gifts families give mothers.

II. **Spelling. Circle the words from the story that are spelled correctly.**

1. MOTHER	MOTHRE
2. CARDZ	CARDS
3. FAMILYS	FAMILIES
4. FLOWERS	FLOURS
5. WOMIN	WOMAN
6. YAD	DAY
7. HOUSWORK	HOUSEWORK
8. COOKING	KOOKING
9. POEM	POIM
10. RUSHA	RUSSIA
11. RESTAURANT	RESTRANT

III. **Spelling. Spell correctly the words from the story.**

1. M O T _ _ R	7. H _ _ S E W O R K
2. C _ _ D S	8. C _ _ K I N G
3. F A M I L _ _ S	9. P _ _ M
4. F L _ _ E R S	10. R U _ _ I A
5. W O _ _ N	11. R E S T _ _ R A N T
6. D _ _	

VICTORY DAY
(DEN POBYEDY)

On May 9 the Russian people celebrate the victory of the Allies over Germany in 1945, at the end of World War II. More than 20 million Soviet soldiers were wounded or killed in the War, along with millions of civilians. Victory Day honors their sacrifices.

Everyone has the day off from work. Each city has a parade, with uniformed soldiers and military bands marching through the streets. People line the streets to watch the parade. They throw flowers, candy and confetti at the marchers.

After the parades, some families visit the cemeteries, remembering family members who died in World War II. Then families and friends meet to share food, wine and memories. At night there are fireworks to mark the end of the Victory Day celebration.

EXERCISES

I. **Matching. Draw a line from the picture to the words that mean the same.**

1. parade

2. soldier

3. flowers, candy & confetti

4. cemetery

5. wine

6. fireworks

II. **Matching. Put the letter of the words that mean the same next to the words from the story.**

1. ___ KILLED	a. Food made of sugar
2. ___ WOUNDED	b. Winning a war or game
3. ___ VICTORY	c. Hurt
4. ___ SOLDIERS	d. Many people who walk and play music
5. ___ BANDS	e. A place to put dead people
6. ___ CEMETERY	f. People who fight in the army
7. ___ CANDY	g. Dead

III. **Writing. You are a soldier in the army. Your country is fighting a war and you are fighting for your country. Write a letter to the President of your country. Tell him or her how you feel about the war.**

_____ _____,

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

IV. **Back-to-Back Interview. Interview another student, asking the questions below. Write down the answers and tell the class the student's story.**

1. What is your name?
2. What country are you from?
3. Do you have war in your country?
4. Who is (or was) your country fighting?
5. Do you have a special holiday to remember the soldiers from your country?
6. What do you do on this holiday?
7. Do you eat special foods on this holiday? What are the names of the special foods?

Pirogi

Dough used with various fillings

4 cups flour
1 packet or 1 cube of yeast
1 egg, beaten
2 Tbsp. sugar
1 tsp. salt
4 Tbsp. vegetable oil

Mix together, cover loosely, and allow to sit for 2 - 2 1/2 hours at room temperature. Take 1/2 or 1/3 of the dough, depending on the size of pirogi desired, and roll it to about 1/4" thick. Fill with one of the following fillings and roll it (like a jelly roll) or fold it (like stromboli). Place on a cookie sheet. Bake in a 350-375 oven for 35 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from oven and allow to cool, covered by a clean cloth.

Meat Filling

2 - 2 1/2 lbs. ground beef, cooked
1 head of cabbage, chopped fine
3 eggs
2 - 3 Tbsp. butter
1 medium onion, diced

Sweet Filling

1 - 2 cups raisins
1 cup sugar
3 tsp. butter
2 tsp. cinnamon

Save some of the raisins, sugar, and cinnamon to sprinkle over the top after the dough and filling are rolled.

VIETNAM

OFFICIAL NAME: Socialist Republic of Vietnam *(Công Hòa Xa Hôi Chu Nghia Viêt Nam)*

AREA: 127,300 square miles (329,700 sq. km.), about the size of New Mexico

POPULATION: 65 million

TOPOGRAPHY: coastal delta, highlands, and mountains to 10,300 ft.

CLIMATE: tropical monsoon

CAPITAL: Hanoi

GOVERNMENT: communist people's republic

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: Vietnamese

MAJOR RELIGIONS: Buddhism, Roman Catholicism, Taoism, Confucianism

IMPORTANT HOLIDAYS:

Vietnam Day, January 27

*Lunar New Year, January or February

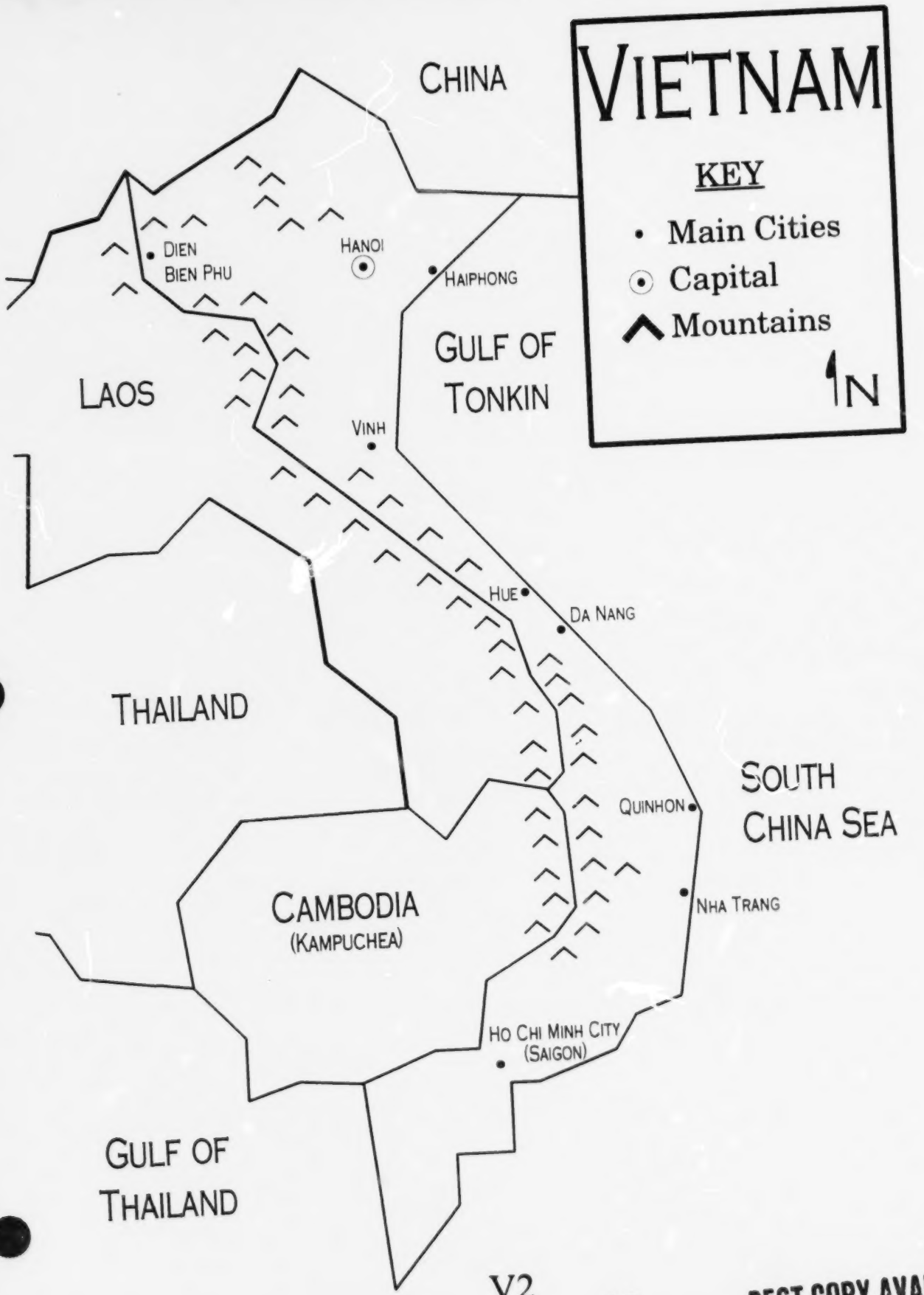
Labor Day, May 1

Battle of Diên Biên Phu, May 7

*Wandering Souls' Day, July

*Mid-Autumn Festival, or Children's Day, August or September

Christmas, December 25



V2

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LUNAR NEW YEAR
(TET NGUYEN-DAN)

Têt, the celebration of the Lunar New Year, started in China 4,000 years ago. It takes place during the full moon before spring planting, in January or February. Vietnamese people of all religions celebrate *Tet* with three or four days off from work.

People prepare for Têt by cleaning their houses and yards, painting buildings, and decorating their houses with branches of peach tree blossoms and red and gold paper. They buy new clothes and shoes. They repay their debts, ask forgiveness, and correct mistakes. People return to their parents' homes with food and gifts. They make offerings of food, candles and incense to their ancestors. Children wish elders well for the next year, and older people give children red envelopes containing money or lottery tickets.

Families and friends eat together, preparing special rice dishes, puddings such as *Banh Chung*, fried pork, cakes and cookies, and watermelon. They drink tea, whiskey, and strong white wine.

The streets are crowded with people visiting and going to the pagoda. There are outdoor concerts, dragon dances, and fireworks every night for three nights.

EXERCISES

I. **Match the opposites.**

___ 1. start	a. none
___ 2. before	b. play
___ 3. spring	c. old
___ 4. all	d. apart
___ 5. off	e. autumn
___ 6. work	f. empty
___ 7. buy	g. finish
___ 8. new	h. days
___ 9. ask	i. after
___ 10. together	j. answer
___ 11. strong	k. indoor
___ 12. crowded	l. on
___ 13. outdoor	m. weak
___ 14. nights	n. sell

II. **Discuss the following questions:**

1. What country are you from? _____
2. Do people in your country celebrate the new year?
   _____
3. When is your country's new year? _____
   _____
4. How do you celebrate it? _____
   _____
   _____
5. Do you have time off from work? _____
6. Do you go to parties? _____
7. Do you eat special foods? _____
   _____
8. Do you give gifts to your family and friends?
   _____

WANDERING SOULS' DAY
(TRUNG NGUYEN)

Most Vietnamese believe that a person's soul lives on after death, and that the spirits of the ancestors can bring good or bad luck to the family. Vietnamese celebrate Wandering Souls' Day in mid-July. They believe that on this day the souls of the dead are allowed to return to earth for one night. The spirits of the dead go back to their home villages.

Families leave gifts of food and paper clothing for the souls of their relatives. Some people believe that the souls of dead people who have no descendants to take care of them will have to drift away on a black cloud. They help these souls with no family by leaving special offerings for them in the temples.

EXERCISES

I. **After each sentence, write the synonym for the underlined word or phrase.**

descendants	gifts	temples
villages	luck	soul

1. A person's spirit lives on after death.

_____

2. The spirits of the ancestors can bring good fortune.

_____

3. The spirits of the dead go back to their home towns.

_____

4. Families leave presents for the souls of their relatives.

_____

5. Some souls of the dead have no children or grandchildren to take care of them.

_____

6. People leave special offerings in the places of worship.

_____

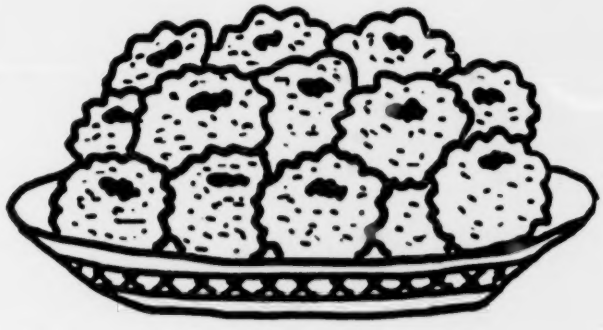
II. **In each group, circle the word that does not belong. Then say why the other two words are similar.**

1.	family	relative	occupation
2.	soul	body	spirit
3.	heavy	black	white
4.	people	animals	men
5.	food	meat	books

MID-AUTUMN FESTIVAL
(TET TRUNG-THU)

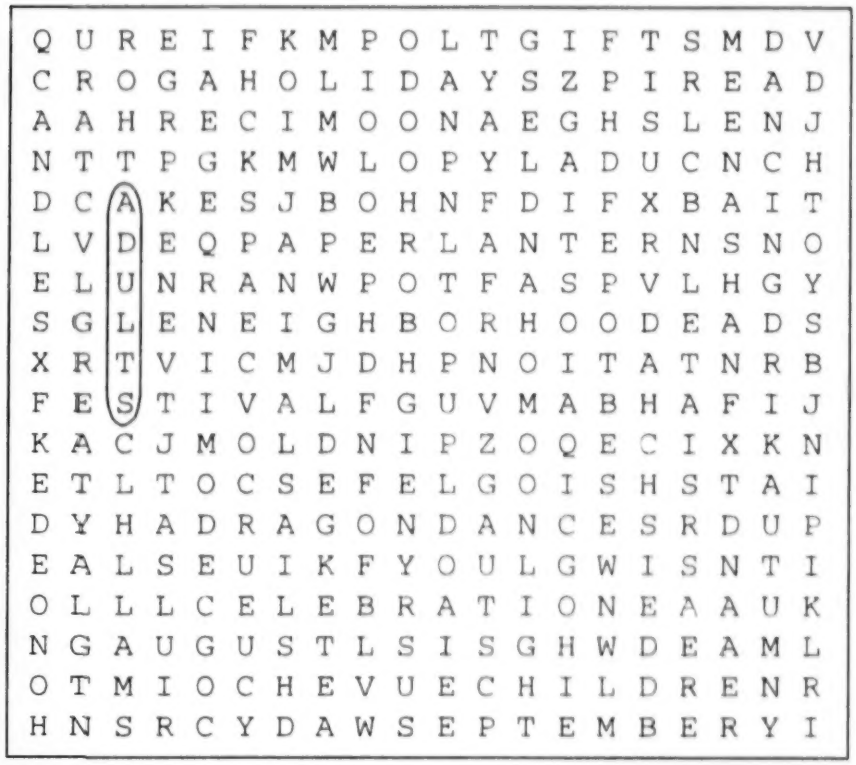
Mid-Autumn Festival is a special holiday for children in Vietnam. This holiday comes in August or September, according to the lunar calendar.

The celebration takes place in the evening by the light of the moon. There are dragon dances. Children light small candles inside paper lanterns shaped like toys and animals. They go around the neighborhood, singing and dancing in the streets.



Adults give children gifts of candy and mid-autumn cakes. These special cakes are made in the color and shape of the moon. The children eat them outside in the moonlight.

WORD SEARCH EXERCISE



Q	U	R	E	I	F	K	M	P	O	L	T	G	I	F	T	S	M	D	V
C	R	O	G	A	H	O	L	I	D	A	Y	S	Z	P	I	R	E	A	D
A	A	H	R	E	C	I	M	O	O	N	A	E	G	H	S	L	E	N	J
N	T	T	P	G	K	M	W	L	O	P	Y	L	A	D	U	C	N	C	H
D	C	A	K	E	S	J	B	O	H	N	F	D	I	F	X	B	A	I	T
L	V	D	E	Q	P	A	P	E	R	L	A	N	T	E	R	N	S	N	O
E	L	U	N	R	A	N	W	P	O	T	F	A	S	P	V	L	H	G	Y
S	G	L	E	N	E	I	G	H	B	O	R	H	O	O	D	E	A	D	S
X	R	T	V	I	C	M	J	D	H	P	N	O	I	T	A	T	N	R	B
F	E	S	T	I	V	A	L	F	G	U	V	M	A	B	H	A	F	I	J
K	A	C	J	M	O	L	D	N	I	P	Z	O	Q	E	C	I	X	K	N
E	T	L	T	O	C	S	E	F	E	L	G	O	I	S	H	S	T	A	I
D	Y	H	A	D	R	A	G	O	N	D	A	N	C	E	S	R	D	U	P
E	A	L	S	E	U	I	K	F	Y	O	U	L	G	W	I	S	N	T	I
O	L	L	L	C	E	L	E	B	R	A	T	I	O	N	E	A	A	U	K
N	G	A	U	G	U	S	T	L	S	I	S	G	H	W	D	E	A	M	L
O	T	M	I	O	C	H	E	V	U	E	C	H	I	L	D	R	E	N	R
H	N	S	R	C	Y	D	A	W	S	E	P	T	E	M	B	E	R	Y	I

Find these words. They are horizontal or vertical.

1. ~~adults~~
2. animals
3. August
4. autumn
5. cakes
6. candles
7. celebration
8. children
9. dancing
10. dragon dances
11. eat
12. festival
13. gifts
14. holiday
15. moon
16. moonlight
17. neighborhood
18. paper lanterns
19. September
20. toys

V9

RECIPES

Banh Chung (Rice Pudding)

1 lb. sticky rice*
1/5 lb. mung beans
1/5 lb. pork meat
banana leaves
pepper
salt

Soak mung beans in cold water overnight. Cut uncooked pork into strips 2" x 3". Add salt and pepper. On a banana leaf, layer rice, beans, pork, beans, and rice. Wrap tightly and tie in a square (North Vietnamese style) or circle (South Vietnamese style). Boil 12 hours for large square (6"x8"), 6 hours for smaller square. Refrigerate until ready to be eaten.

Stir-Fry

1 - 2 cups cooked rice
1 lb. beef, cut up
4 Vietnamese hot dogs, sliced
1 medium onion, sliced
pepper
salt
sauce

Heat some vegetable oil in a frying pan. Cook all ingredients together overmedium high heat until meat is tender.

*Note: Ingredients such as sticky rice and banana leaves are available in most Asian food stores.